REMARKS

By this amendment, claim 10 has been amended in the application. Currently, claims 1-29 are pending in the application.

The indication that claim 29 is allowed is noted with appreciation.

The indication that claims 6, 9, 10, 21 and 23 contain allowable subject matter is also noted with appreciation.

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. By this amendment, claim 10 has been amended to recite "The recording medium access device according to claim 6, wherein said card controller gives priority to one of said adapters adjacent to either of said recording medium or said information processing device over all remaining adapters of said plurality of adapters". Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-5, 8, 11-13, 15-20, 24-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Minami et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0163620). Also, claims 1-5, 8, 11-13, 15-20, 24-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Minami et al. in view of Ueda et al. (U.S.

Patent No. 6,994,263). Also, claims 14 and 27 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Minami et al. in view of Ueda et al. and further in view of Okamoto (U.S. patent No. 6,993,690). Further, claims 7 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over Minami et al. in view of Ueda et al. and further in view of Nakai et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2006/0069925).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the remarks below.

The present invention relates to a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium capable of performing a plurality of operations and relates to a recording medium access method (see page 1, paragraph [0001] of the specification).

In Fig. 1, a semiconductor memory card 101 is a recording medium. The semiconductor memory card 101 is configured to include an authentication area 104, a first area 105, a second area 106 and an area selection part 107 (see page 13, lines 5-9 of the specification).

A host 103 is an information processing device that uses the semiconductor memory card 101. The host 103 has a host controller 111 (see page 13, line 24 - page 14, line 1 of the specification).

An adapter 102 is configured to include a card controller 108, a determination part 109 and an area switching part 110.

The area selection part 107 switches the area to be used between the first area 105 and the second area 106 according to an external instruction such as a command (see page 13, lines 19-22 of the specification).

In Fig. 1, the area switching part 110 is set at the side of A, which shows the state where the first area 105 in the semiconductor memory card 101 is selected. In Fig. 2, the area switching part 110 is set at the side of B, which shows the state where the second area 106 in the semiconductor memory card 101 is selected (see page 14, lines 6-25 of the specification).

Fig. 3 is a flow chart showing the basic processing of the access method in accordance with the present invention. When the switching part 110 is set at the side of A, the card controller 108 issues a switching command to select the first area 105 in the semiconductor memory card 101 (S303). The area selection part 107 that receives the switching command selects the first area 105 and switches the subsequent commands to be applied to the first area 105 (S304) (see page 15, line 21 - page 16, line 2 of the specification).

When the switching part 110 is set at the side of B as shown in Fig. 2, the card controller 108 issues a switching command to select the second area 106 in the semiconductor memory card 101 (S305). The area selection part 107 that accepts the switching

command selects the second area 106 and switches the subsequent commands to be applied to the second area 106 (S306)(see page 16, lines 4-10 of the specification).

Independent claim 1 recites "a card controller for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from said switching part".

Also, independent claim 16 recites "a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated".

These features are not shown or suggested by Minami et al., Ueda et al. Okamoto and Nakai et al.

The Examiner admitted that Minami et al. do not disclose the recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command and the card controller issuing a switching command to switch the area of the attached recording medium (see page 4, lines 16-20 of the office action).

As the Examiner admitted, it is believed that Minami et al. do not show or suggest these presently claimed features of the present invention. Applicants also submit that Ueda et al. do not make up for the deficiencies in Minami et al.

Ueda et al. relate to an IC card that has at least a CPU and semiconductor memory and is capable of providing a plurality of services on one card (see col. 1, lines 6-8).

Ueda et al. disclose that on the substrate inside the IC card 10a, there is an interface 101, a CPU 100, a memory unit M that is operable to record information of applications corresponding to a plurality of services, a switch SW that selects one of the services, and an access-control unit 102 that is located on the address line and control line of the data line, address line and control line between the CPU 100 and the memory unit M and that is operable to receive signals from the switch SW (see col. 4, lines 53-62).

Ueda et al. also disclose that there are programs and data stored in the MEMORY AREA1 to MEMORY AREA3 in the memory unit M for executing the application corresponding to the services. When the switch SW is set to a specified position (here it can be switched between three positions SW1 to SW3), the access-control unit 102 selects the address and control line that corresponds to the position of the switch SW and sets the memory area that can be accessed by the CPU 100, and it becomes possible for the CPU 100 to access just the selected memory area (see col. 4, line 62 - col. 5, line 5).

Ueda et al. do not disclose a card controller for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from the switching part as claimed in independent claim 1.

Also, Ueda et al. do not disclose a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated as claimed in independent claim 16.

Specifically, applicants respectfully submit that Ueda et al. do not disclose a recording medium access device which is separated from a recording medium. Because of this configuration, Ueda et al. do not disclose a card controller for issuing a switching command to the recording medium.

In the present invention, the recording medium has a plurality of areas as well as area selecting part. The area selecting part selects one of these areas based on the switching commands.

Applicants respectfully submit that it would not have been obvious to combine the device of Minami et al. and the device of Ueda et al. because none of these references disclose the switching command as claimed in the present invention.

For these reasons, it is believed that Ueda et al. do not show or suggest the presently claimed features of the present

invention. Applicants also submit that Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not make up for the deficiencies in Minami et al. and Ueda et al.

Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching part that can be operated from an outside; and a card controller for issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium according to an operation from the switching part as claimed in independent claim 1.

Also, Okamoto and Nakai et al. do not disclose that a recording medium access method in a recording medium access device for accessing a recording medium having a plurality of areas and an area selecting part for selecting one of the areas based on a switching command, comprising: a switching step of detecting an input operation from an outside; and a card control step of issuing a switching command to switch an area of an attached recording medium when said switching step is operated as claimed in independent claim 16.

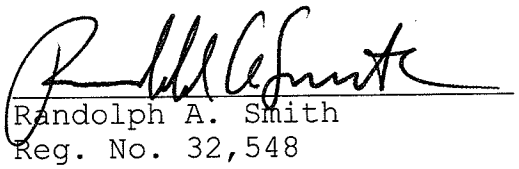
It is therefore respectfully submitted that Minami et al., Ueda et al., Okamoto and Nakai et al., individually or in combination, do not teach, disclose or suggest the presently

claimed invention and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine these references to render the present claims obvious.

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and an action to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the amendments or these remarks, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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